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SUBJECT: IRELAND TO CONSIDER DARFUR HYBRID OPERATION
CONTRIBUTION

REF: STATE 90022

¶11. (SBU) Ireland will discuss the possibility of contributing personnel to the UN/AU Hybrid Operation for Darfur at a July 19 inter-agency meeting involving the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, and the Irish Police, according to Eamonn McKee, DFA Director for Conflict Resolution, to whom Pol/Econ Chief delivered reftel demarche on July 2. McKee committed to advise the Embassy on the outcome of the meeting and on the possible need for follow-up senior-level Washington interventions. He noted that Sudan was a priority issue for Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern, who visited Darfur and Khartoum in July 2006 and who has regularly highlighted his concerns about the region in official EU discussions.

¶12. (SBU) In terms of available personnel, McKee pointed out that roughly 200 Irish troops had finished their mission in UNMIL in Liberia in June, but would need time for retraining and equipment upgrades. (Before the UNMIL mission ended, there were more than 800 Irish troops overseas, close to the policy target ceiling of 850 for foreign assignments.) He added that a chief concern for the Irish Government in considering participation in the Hybrid Operation would be the stability of funding for AMIS, which is to provide logistical support for the follow-on UN/AU force. (Comment: Post is reasonably optimistic that Ireland will contribute personnel to the Hybrid Operation; the issues will be the amount of time needed to redeploy the former UNMIL troops and coordination with Irish commitments to Kosovo and the EU Battle Groups.)

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